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Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EA-07 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15
CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 SSC-01 /052 W
----------172030Z 112942 /72
R 170850Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
TO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 7519

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINR, PDIP, CE

SUBJ: APPOINTMENT OF NEW SRI LANKAN AMBASSADOR TO INDONESIA

1. RETIRING MINISTER OF LABOR MICHAEL PAUL DE ZOYSA SIRI-WARDENA (SEE-REE-WAR-DA-NA) HAS BEEN APPOINTED AMBASSADOR FROM SRI LANKA TO INDONESIA REPLACING KENNETH SHINYA. BORN SEPTEMBER 6, 1906, SIRIWARDENA GRADUATED FROM A PRESTIGIOUS ENGLISH MEDIUM SECONDARY SCHOOL IN COLOMB AND TOOK TO BUSINESS (FIBER MILLING) AND PROPRIETARY FARMING. HE WAS AN EARLY AND CLOSE CONFIDANT OF S.W.R.D. BANDARANAIKE, WHO WAS PRIME MINI-STER FROM 1956 UNTIL HIS ASSASSINATION IN 1959. SIRIWARDENA ENTERED PARLIAMENT IN 1960, THREE MONTHS BEFORE BANDARANAIKE'S WIDOW ASSUMED OFFICE AS PRIME MINISTER. IN HIS FIRST YEAR IN PARLIAMENT, SIRIWARDENA WAS APPOINTED DEPUTY MINISTER OF LABOR AND BECAME A FULL MINISTER IN 1961.

2. SIRIWARDENA HAS REMAINED A CLOSE FRIEND OF THE BANDARANAIKE FAMILY. SEVERAL YEARS AGO, THERE WAS SPECULATION THAT SIRI-WARDENA WOULD RESIGN HIS SEAT TO ALLOW PRIME MINISTER BANDAR-ANAIKE'S SON TO CONTEST THE BY-ELECTION. ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT, IT WAS CLEAR THAT SIRIWANDENA WAS TIRING OF THE RIGORS OF POLITICS. WHEN PARLIAMENT WAS DISSOLVED LAST MONTH PREPARATORY
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TO GENERAL ELECTIONS IN JULY, SIRIWARDENA ANNOUNCED THAT HE WOULD NOT BE CONTESTING HIS SEAT AGAIN; THE APPOINTMENT TO INDONESIA COMES AS A DIGNIFIED CAP TO HIS CAREER. HOWEVER, IF MRS. BANDARANAIKE'S PARTY SHOULD BE DEFEATED AT NEXT MONTH'S ELECTIONS -- WHICH IS A BETTER THAN EVEN CHANCE -- SIRIWARDENA'S AMBASSADORSHIP MAY BE VERY SHORT INDEED.

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3. SIRIAFRDENA IS SHORT IN STATURE AND A RATHER UNASSUMING TYPE WHO TENDS TO RAMBLE IN HIS CONVERSATIONS. HE HAS ALWAYS BEEN FRIENDLY WITH EMBASSY PERSONNEL AND LIKES TO STRESS HIS ANTI-MARXIST VIEWS (THIS IS IN A COALITION GOVERNMENT WHICH INCLUDED COMMUNISTS UNTIL LAST FEBRUARY). HE COMES FROM THE SALAGAMA CASTE, SOMEWHAT LOWER RITUALLY THAN THE DOMINANT GOYIGAMAS. THIS HAS HELPED HIM IN HIS POLITICAL CAREER SINCE CABINET-BALANCING IN SIR LANKA REQUIRES REPRESENTATIVES OF ALL MAJOR CASTES.
PERKINS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AMBASSADORS, PERSONNEL APPOINTMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 17-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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SAS ID: 2116765
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To: JAKARTA
Type: TE
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